Pacific School of Religion Berkeley, Calif.

The Christian Century PULPIT

A Periodical of Contemporary Preaching

CHARLES CLAYTON MORRISON, *Editor*

VOLUME VI | CHICAGO, MARCH, 1935 | NUMBER 3

Lenten Number

JOHN J. MOMENT
"Let Us Worship God!"

EDWARD THURNEYSEN
"A New Beginning"

SAMUEL HARKNESS
"Salvation—A Modern Definition"

WILLIAM BISHOP GATES
"Christ's Borrowings"

BUELL G. GALLAGHER
"Jesus and Christianity"

HERBERT BOOTH SMITH
"The Angry Tree"

EDWIN EWART AUBREY
"After Freedom—What?"

FREDERICK W. NORWOOD
"A Pastoral Prayer"

PREACHER PROBLEMS

ORVIS F. JORDAN
"The Minister and His Community"

Let Us Worship God!

BY JOHN J. MOMENT

I went up to Jerusalem for to worship. Acts 24:11.

HERE we have the primary purpose of the church; primarily the church is a place where men go "for to worship." This, notwithstanding the fact that the church has other purposes which we should hesitate to characterize as secondary.

For one thing, the church is a place where men go "for to" learn. In the very earliest days, when Paul wrote his various epistles, his idea was that these epistles were to be read to the assembled congregations for their guidance in matters both of Christian doctrine and Christian practice, and the epistles were in fact so used. Each epistle, to whatever particular church addressed, was copied out over and over again and read in the public assemblies of all the churches.

Furthermore, passages were selected from these and other epistles, from the Gospels and from the Old Testament, for comment by one member or another of the congregation. Thus arose the sermon, which has never ceased to hold its place in the church service; sometimes, it is true, being reduced to a very subordinate rôle and sometimes, on the other hand, being elevated to a comparative importance beyond what it deserves.

An adoring wife once explained to me that the reason her husband never went to church was that he knew so much more about religion than any of the preachers. One cannot but sympathize with such a man in church, compelled to submit to instruction by those whom he ought rather to be instructing, but he still ought to remember that out of the mouth of babes and sucklings wisdom sometimes proceeds, and he ought to remember further that instruction is not the only purpose of the church.

For another thing, the church is and always has been organized as a missionary society, charged with the responsibility of making Christ known in its own community and across the world. Too often, it is true, the members of the church have committed to the church

25 Cents a Copy Entered as second-class matter October 14, 1929, at Post Office at Chicago, Ill., under the act of March 3, 1879. Published monthly by The Christian Century Press, 440 S. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill. **Two Dollars a Year**

organization too much of this responsibility. They have hired a preacher or sent out a missionary to publish the glad tidings and considered that they were doing their full part if they submitted to the ordeal of hearing them published and helping to pay the bills. Christ, we may be sure, never designed that any organization was to relieve his followers of their individual responsibility for the proclamation of the gospel. But, on the other hand, no company of his followers can be serious in their desire to discharge their missionary responsibilities without recognizing the need for organization. We can reach people, at home and abroad, with the message of Christ through the church and its servants and its services as we could not begin to do without them. And here also we have one of the principal purposes of the church.

Again, the church is a charity organization. If on the occasion mentioned in our text Paul went up to Jerusalem to worship, on another occasion of which we have record he went up to distribute alms—alms contributed, out of anything but abundance, by the members of the outlying churches to the still more impoverished members of the mother church. Even before this, special officers had been appointed in the Jerusalem church to have oversight of its own poor. And all through the centuries since, the church has been vigorous in its ministry not only to the spiritual but to the physical, and for that matter to the intellectual and cultural, needs of its own members and the community. It has founded hospitals for the sick, homes for orphans and the aged, schools, hospitals, welfare agencies of every conceivable variety. Many of these agencies—most of them—are now under secular control but there is scarcely one of them which, if you trace it back far enough, you will not find rooted in the church. And as long as the church remains true to its history, to its charter, to the inner impulses of its life, you will find it sensitive to all the varied needs of humanity and ready to adopt whatever means the situation may call for to meet those needs.

THE PRIMACY OF WORSHIP

The church has no one purpose, but several purposes, and it would be difficult to say which is more important than another. But it still is possible to say which is primary, the underlying impulse in the minds of men which gathered them together in religious assemblies long centuries before Christ came into the world, back as far in the history of the race as we have any record, written or unwritten. The primary and original purpose for which men have gathered in their religious assemblies has been that which took Paul to Jerusalem, that they might worship.

Nowadays we often hear men say that they can worship elsewhere as well as in the church, and that therefore they do not need the church. Says Emily Dickinson:

> Some keep the Sabbath going to church;
> I keep it staying at home,
> With a bobolink for chorister,
> And an orchard for a dome.

This is very prettily said and embodies a truth, which, moreover, is not new. The idea that the worship of God is not confined to temples and churches was first set forth by a religious teacher many years ago in a conversation with a woman at a wellside. She was concerned with the question of what particular temple, Gerazim or Jerusalem, was the divinely appointed place of prayer, and his answer was, neither. "The hour cometh and now is when the true worshiper shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." And from that day his followers have insisted that worship is not confined to particular places, that we must worship God everywhere or we can worship him nowhere.

Nevertheless, as a matter of fact, Jesus himself went to church, both to the temple and to the synagogue. And here in our text we find Paul making a long and perilous journey by land and sea all the way to Jerusalem "for to worship." Why could he not have worshiped as well where he was, in Thessalonica or Corinth, Caesarea or Tyre?

The answer is that he not only could have worshiped in any of these places, but he did so worship in all of them. He worshiped in the little assemblies where he met from time to time with his converts, he worshiped in his own lodgings, on the streets, at his tent-making. His whole waking life was one paean of praise to God. But, with all this, he still found himself moved to make the long pilgrimage to Jerusalem "for to worship."

THE SANCTUARY AS A SHRINE

No one to whom the impulse to worship is a real experience will have any difficulty in understanding Paul's motives, his hunger to get back to Jerusalem and join in the services of the sanctuary which to him had always been the church. Ordinarily the more conscious a man is of the presence of God in all his life, the stronger will be his impulse from time to time to find a sanctuary where he can unite with a company of like-minded people in giving expression to the praise which fills his heart.

When the modern man says that he can worship as well in the open country, in the mountains, at the seashore—wherever there happens to be a good golf course—as well as in church and therefore feels no need of church, what he probably means is that he feels no need of worship. He is likely to be quite frank in expressing his light opinion of the exercises of worship. He will tell you that religion for him means the life you live, integrity in business, neighborly kindness, not singing hymns and saying prayers. Even the people within the church have shared this attitude.

I have said that it would be hard to determine which function of the church is more important than another, but we have still had pretty definite ideas as to which functions in general are most important and which one is least important. It is the care of the poor, medical missions, and such direct ministry to men's physical needs which are accepted as most clearly justifying the existence of the church, with an honorable place also given to its influence in character-building, especially among the children. But who thinks of the hymns and prayers as of any vital importance in the life of the community? We have spoken of them as the "preliminary exercises," as if the real business of the church service did not begin till the sermon. We have done our best to justify the term by using anthems written for no

conceivable purpose other than to show off the singers' voices and hymns whose one virtue is that they "go," with no one caring where they go to. The multitude of ugly churches strewn over the land are a monument to our contempt for worship.

And let us not flatter ourselves that our contempt for worship is a mere result of the new emphasis we are placing on character and neighborly service as the vital elements in religion. Will anyone venture to suggest that we place more emphasis on character and neighborly service than did Jesus of Nazareth? And yet Jesus set considerable value on worship.

The truth is that we have not gained something, we have lost something, and what we have lost may turn

JOHN J. MOMENT

out to be of more practical importance than we had supposed.

It is not always easy to tell where the practical ends and the impractical begins. A young woman sent out to this country by the Soviet government to study our educational system told me that the Soviet commissioner of education would have liked to take children from their parents at birth, in order to save them from the religious notions which they were sure to pick up at home, but the commissioner of health vetoed the proposal, because he said the children would all die. The state could provide the children with food and clothing and shelter, but there are other intangible things which the child receives from the mother, which the state cannot provide, and without which babies die.

The impulse of worship has played a much more considerable part in the development of human society than is commonly recognized. Here, for example, are a few sentences from "Religion and Art," by Alessandro Della Seta, professor of archaeology in the University of Genoa: "All the art of the human race is essentially religious art: from the Chaldean to the Egyptian, from the Mycenaean to the Greek, from the Assyrian to the pre-Buddhist Chinese, from the Mexican to the Peruvian, there is no exception. . . . Art then will never arise and develop among men unless it has a foundation in religion. Art absolutely profane in origin . . . is inconceivable in human history and has absolutely never existed."

Architecture, as an art, was first developed as a means by which men might provide themselves houses worthy of their communal sacrifices and prayers. Painting and sculpture arose as aids in beautifying the temple. Music and poetry had their birth at the altar, and even the drama began as part of the temple service.

Later, the various arts were taken over and applied to secular purposes, but in no case, except perhaps the single one of Shakespeare and the drama, have they been carried to greater heights of achievement in their secular development than they had already attained in the service of religion. You find no more beautiful buildings than the Greek temples and the medieval cathedrals. You find no greater sculpture than that of the statues of the Greek gods and no greater painting than the madonnas and saints of the renaissance. You find no greater music than that which Beethoven, Mozart, Handel and Bach created for the choirs and organs of the church.

SPIRITUAL SPRINGS DRYING UP

So much at least of practical value the impulse of worship in the hearts of men has done for us; it has given us all the arts we have. And it has done more than this, it has had no small share in the development of all that is greatest and most beautiful in the qualities of human character. Has it not been in those hours when the soul was lifted into conscious communion with God that men have most clearly recognized their kinship with the divine and the unworthiness of living in the world of the mere animal? No less than architecture and sculpture and painting, music and poetry, the highest ideals and aspirations of humanity have been born out of that same impulse which carried Paul over land and sea to Jerusalem, the desire to worship.

If in our preoccupation with material things and material success we are permitting this impulse to weaken, it threatens nothing less than the drying up of the deep springs which have fed all the flowers of our human life, without which our garden spots, which we have fondly hoped would gradually extend to cover the earth, will themselves run out into bleak sterility.

You remember the incident in "The Cotter's Saturday Night" when the father of the household, the cheerful supper done, gathers the family round the ingle, takes down the old ha'-bible, and "Let us worship God," he said. You can scarcely read Burns's homely account of the incident without a catch in your throat, in the realization that there, in that rustic cottage, you are in the presence of something mysteriously great, Alpine in its sublimity.

With us family prayers have mostly gone out. We say that, with the rush of modern life, we are too busy for them. It is not really that we are too busy, we

could find time if we thought them important enough. It is, I fear, only another sign of the weakening of the impulse to worship in the mind of the modern man. In any case, the consequence is that, in the main, men worship today in the church or nowhere.

I say this not to commend the church to you, in order that you may attach more value to the church, but in order that you may get more value out of the church and through the church make a greater contribution to your generation. It is very important to the life of the world that we should make the church, with its services, a place which really invites the soul to worship.

And there is something else which is perhaps even more important. In any modern church, no less than in that of Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," men may come to scoff and remain to pray, but most of the time we are likely to find what we come for. We go out of the church and say that we have enjoyed the service or enjoyed the sermon, or have not enjoyed them; how often do we ask ourselves if we have met God? It is above all things important that when we come to church we should come resolved that this hour of the church service is to be an hour in which we meet and worship God.

A New Beginning

By Edward Thurneysen

In that hour came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who then is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And he called to him a little child, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me: but whoso shall cause one of these little ones to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling! for it must needs be that the occasions come; but woe to that man through whom the occasion cometh! And if thy hand or thy foot causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into eternal fire. And if thine eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the hell of fire. Matthew 18:1-9.

JESUS places children before us. He uses them as a parable in order to say something decisive to us. Children are people who still stand at the beginning of life. Our questions, those questions of grown-ups, have no meaning for them as yet. And still less our answers, all these profound, clever and serious philosophies of life which we have constructed for ourselves. Before children, life lies as yet unspoiled. For them everything is filled with possibility and promise; life is an open book filled with unwritten pages. With them so many things are possible. With us grown-ups there is much, oh very much, that is no longer possible. For us it is too late for almost everything. We do not have an undeveloped life before us. On the contrary, we have run ourselves into ruts or run our lives into an impassé. And when we are asked to consider this word about becoming as children—we who have run ourselves into an impassé—we are involved in some very painful discoveries and confessions. I have to start off with experiences of my own life and you would have to follow with yours. For there is not a single one among us who would not have one or more spots in his life on which he could put his finger and say, "Ah, I am no more like a child who can and ought to begin every day with new hope."

OUR TREADMILL EXISTENCE

Let me illustrate with something simple, even though this condition is difficult enough for us. We have become fossilized in our vocation, our work. Day after day we go through with it in the office, the factory, the workshop, or the home. We do our work without joy. We begin our work in the morning and, heavily burdened, return from work at night. We do what we have to do, but we work as in a treadmill. Or, what is worse—I am thinking now of the so-called professions, of us pastors, teachers, doctors and lawyers—we do our work in routine fashion. The wheel turns, we earn our salary—but don't ask how! Externally everything seems to be running true to form, but down deep everything is empty—wheels running, but it is an empty grind, has been for years and years. Another thing which lies deeper. We have married; we live as man with wife, as wife with husband, as parents with children, as workers with fellow-workers. But we have got into ruts together. What of the joy, the life, the thrill, the dynamic element that we must have in common, if we are to endure life together? We are faithful in our married life, but we simply drag it along as though it were a burden. How many marriages are being dragged along like that! How great a void is there between parents and children, friends and friends!

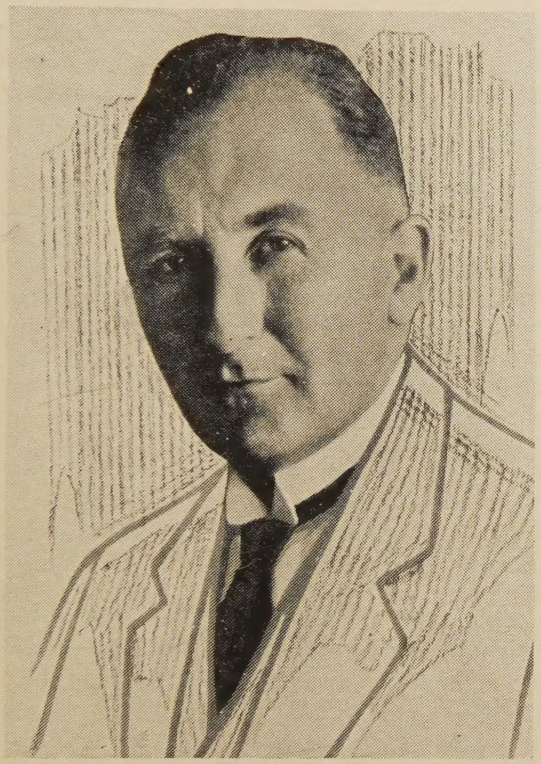
Still more important: our faults, our failings, our sins. As children we glided into these sins. At first we resisted them, but more and more they entwined us like a creeper plant that would hinder us in walking freely. Today we scarcely resist at all. But we groan and suffer. Is not this the really burdensome feature about growing older, that we are forced to see, in so many ways, that going back again is no longer possible?

WE CAN GO BACK!

But listen! "Unless you turn and become as little children. . . ." What does that mean? It means—we cannot understand this otherwise—it must mean, "There is, yes, there is a possibility of going back." There is such a thing as a new beginning! There is possibility, hope, future, youth—yes, and for us, precisely for those of us who have got stuck fast, who have run ourselves into a corner, who have grown old, even standing at death's door. Jesus does not try to fool us. When he says, "Unless you turn and become as little children. . . .," he means, "You can, you may, go do it!" That is Jesus, through whom, for whose sake, in whose presence there is this possibility of a new

beginning in a life that has already grown old. We have really said everything that can be said about Jesus, when we say that. To come to Jesus means to let him tell us that. It means that to be an old, scarred man, in just such a predicament as we have described—one without hope, without possibilities—and then, of a sudden, to face this: "Come to me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will revive you!"

We must not understand that revitalization which comes from Jesus to mean that we must become actual children, childish people. But it indicates that, though we are stuck fast, we may yet come to a point where life begins anew. We did say a moment ago that in many external and internal things we cannot go back again.



EDWARD THURNEYSEN

But in the main thing we can go back. And because it is possible in this main thing, therefore, in a greater measure and degree than we dare think, it is possible in the countless external and internal non-essentials of our lives. There is a new beginning, a new creation possible in Jesus Christ, which reaches clear down where we are all fettered in body and soul—yes, into sickness, and life's every need. We can! Oh, let us hear, let the gospel tell us, "We can!" Now, do not interpose immediately and say: "No, I cannot; I am too old; too fossilized; nothing in life can be made new again." Indeed, we can! This is the grace of God in Christ which frees us from the old, hopeless idea which says: "No use to try; I simply can't." Certainly you can! Rise up and walk. Christ gives you hope and a future. Oh, that we could only hear and see that!

NOT IN OUR OWN STRENGTH!

Of course, this does not mean that we can rise up in our own strength, and by our own efforts renew our life from within. It is not true that we have within ourselves this new beginning, perhaps covered by a little rubbish, yet nevertheless with our own twisting and turning, and by poking around within ourselves we can bring the new beginning to the light of day and discover it as a miracle and enter into it. That kind of thing is being shouted at us nowadays from all sides, right in connection with the spiritual situation of today. More than one trickster and magician stands ready who promises to show us the approach to this new beginning which lies hidden under rubbish in us. Beware of such tempters! For this new beginning, to which the words of Jesus refer when he speaks about the children, lies not in us—not as one said, unfortunately, within us. It lies without, beyond.

This new beginning about which Jesus speaks is *God.* Yes, this is God, undoubtedly that God of Jesus Christ, that one, living, merciful One, whose mercy consists in that he has prepared for us such a new beginning of life, such a great redeeming "You can!" From this God this new beginning of life has moved toward us. It is close at hand, it is promised to us, placed before our very eyes as the great, new possibility in the midst of our impossible, old life. That is the kingdom of heaven of which the words of Jesus are so full. That is Jesus himself; this movement of the kingdom of God from God toward us, so that from now on we may say, "Immanuel, God with us, God among us!" And it is thus that we should let ourselves be directed to this God "with all our heart and with all our might," until, as Jesus said, we would rather lose one eye, one foot, one hand, than separate ourselves from this God and that which he has prepared for us. Yes, we should be really radical, totally one-sided, as we cleave to and cling to this God and his promise. Yes, this is the new beginning, this determination never to relinquish the gracious and merciful word of this God.

We are thinking of Martin Luther. If I have understood anything of the reformation of the sixteenth century, it is this one thing: The fathers of that time again entered into this one-sided, radical "holding-fast," not to the possibilities in themselves, but "holding-fast" to the word of God which spoke to them from outside of themselves in Jesus Christ.

WHAT IS SIN, FORGIVENESS?

We could simply say with these fathers: "Forgiveness of sins is what is meant by the passage about becoming as children, although this particular word about sin, as such, is not found here." For what is sin? Sin means separation from God. Sin may be anything in my life that forces me away from, and shuts me off from, making this beginning; everything which allows me to miss the road or to run into a blind alley. These old walls and partitions are pierced. Jesus broke through them. I can, I may, I am free! That is what he tells me. This is the forgiveness of sins. Why are we so deaf that we will not be told this? Why will we not hear this: You are not the one you pretend to be, as others know you; you are not what you have made of your life, that small, cramped prison you have built up around yourself in your bitterness, and this isolated life of yours, your worries and your sins. You can leave it;

it is really only an encasement around you in which you have crept away. Jesus Christ calls you out of it, and because he tells you you are something altogether different from what you are, you are a child of the Father forever.

It may be that we have come more closely to these great things than we have been for a long time. This forgiveness of sins as a new beginning of life in God—that is the thing which in all the gloom of the times is beginning to dawn upon us again, as a light in the darkness of night. For today we have driven ourselves into ruts and must see for ourselves that things cannot go on this way much longer, or we will tumble into an abyss. In our opinions, our ways and our ideas we have become altogether so uncertain that we have become, like soil, loosened to receive the great hope which says: "There must be a future, and we will go forward."

Finally, we are pointed beyond our human capacities and possibilities so indubitably that we cannot help but recognize this fact: "In Jesus Christ, and only in Jesus Christ, can we go on." Thus our age faces the portals of the kingdom of God.

Having said this, the responsibility resting upon men in our day is particularly heavy. Today, if ever, there is need of not only people who have been stirred, but men who stand at attention, inwardly free men, open-minded people, in order that the kingdom of heaven which is before our doors may come in to us.

A NEW "ATTENTIVENESS" NEEDED

Let us look at three more points in this word of the Bible concerning this new attentiveness, this new readiness which is demanded of us today.

First: "Whosoever shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me." That is also speaking in parables. This child—he is a symbol of that new beginning of life in God. "Really," says Jesus, "this new life comes to you from God. It knocks urgently at the door of your old life." As a child beseechingly approaches us, to be received of us, so there are times in our lives and in the life of generations where the new thing which God wishes to say to us comes very close to us. It may come to us through people who, as Jesus says in this text, belong to the small and humble folks who believe on him and who carry about in their own lives something of this new beginning from God. I again think of Martin Luther, in whose life an entire age saw what is involved in the fresh founding of life in the power of forgiveness. Such people challenge us simply by what they are, until we too stand before them and think: "I, too, would like to receive something of that which has been given to this plain and humble person. I, too, would like to begin over again as he did. I would like to come to the place where I could have some hope in my misspent life, hope for the sake of my husband, my wife, my children, hope in my work, hope for a little new freedom, with all that I am fettered to my faults and failings."

But now, have a care! Whoever, in such a moment, takes his hand from the plow and looks backward; whoever thinks, "Oh, no, things will not progress; they will go on as before"; whoever thinks, "I do not want to go along upon this new path where one has to hope and believe—I might make myself conspicuous—that's too 'religious' for me—'forgiveness of sins' sounds like 'Salvation Army stuff' "; whoever thinks and speaks that way slams the door shut, he misses the opportunity; he is not awake and he is not prepared for that which God would do for him. Such moments come upon us quietly and without any commotion. Whoever expects an immediate, mighty, surging up of conversion and awakening has certainly not understood what it means when Jesus knocks at our door like a pleading child. But much, in fact everything, depends upon this, namely, that there are people who will take hold of the latch and open the door.

FALSIFIERS OF THE GOSPEL

Jesus goes on to speak in these strong words about "offenses," or "occasions of stumbling." Now "offense" means in this case distortion, falsification, twisting. In other words, this new beginning from God is a reality. But now there are human beings who get hold of it, take it into their own hands and make something worldly, something arbitrary, something altogether perverse out of it: holy things are cast before the swine. That which is godly is disfigured beyond recognition; it is abused, made a laughing stock of so that shame and wrath rise within one over this distortion of what God had begun so good, so new, so dynamically.

I am thinking of the ecclesiastical politicians, of the party leaders, of representatives of all sorts of movements, who misuse the fire of the gospel to pursue their own selfish ends for the sake of a little power, and to set their organizations going and bring them to a place of importance, to occupy the chief seats, to proclaim their party slogans and line up their following. I am thinking of those theologians for whom the free forgiveness of sins is too broad and free. They make forgiveness much smaller; they set up conditions and laws, and take away the comfort of the sinners and the dying and once more lock the door of heaven, which the Savior opened so wide. Let us hear how Jesus reckons with these people. Wrath arises within him, the wrath that at one time made him cleanse the temple with the cudgel. "Out," he says, "away with them!" Sink them in the depths somewhere, these falsifiers and traders, where they can not come up again—that's what one should do. Oh, that something of this wrath might arise in our church!

GLITTERING HUMANISM

Of course, we would have to turn this wrath against ourselves first of all, for we ourselves are these falsifiers of the gospel, who give offense time and again; these tacticians and politicians, who take the things which God puts into our hearts and turn and twist them into something—yes, crank up a "movement," with them—anything that is humanistic and glitters on the outside. All this, just so we do not have to be quiet! But that, we cannot! Just so we do not need to have patience and to hope! In spite of the fact that everything depends upon our coming to this patience and waiting for what *God does,* and what remains pure and holy only when it remains *in his hands.*

Finally, this word about the one-eyed, the crippled,

the lame and the maimed who enter into the kingdom. This refers to those who have resisted on behalf of the things of God unto blood. They have sacrificed to prove their devotion. They have given of their very best, of their very life. An eye, a hand, a foot, they have literally thrown away. Again, this is a parable and these things mean all those noble gifts and possibilities which have been bestowed only upon man. Why have they sacrificed these? Because they saw that it is just these strong, good, powerful things in them that stand in God's way. Far better to be poor and helpless, with God, than to be strong and possessive of two legs, but without God.

That is a remarkable saying. Do we perhaps have such capacities and possibilities which are to become a temptation for us to go our own ways, to pursue our own plans, and which must be sacrificed, must be surrendered, thrown away, when God calls us into his kingdom? Perhaps our great intellectual cleverness, with which we examine and judge everything without ever asking: "Is this thinking rightly and honestly done —before God?" Perhaps our glibness, our brilliant dialectical ability with which we befuddle other people? Or perhaps it is simply our so-called moral integrity, our social prestige, our irreproachableness with which we stand in God's way. The hour might be when the kingdom comes to us and says: Away with it all! Give up your social prestige of which you are so proud and which makes you so hard; give up your cleverness, your culture which hinders you from being plain and objective; give up your art of defending yourself and your way of banking on your always being in the right! Far better not to have right on your side; far better to give in and say, "I am no better than others." Far better to be a cripple, one-eyed, disease-infected, to have your reputation questioned and be one who thus became accessible to the grace of God in the forgiveness of sins.

HEALING THROUGH SUFFERING

Before us the picture of him rises now, who spoke these words—the picture of Jesus Christ. He is not only a cripple, lame, one-eyed, but dishonored, condemned, hanged. In his case entering the kingdom was by way of that cross, by way of that sacrifice which is without parallel. More than likely we will have to understand all this in a deeper and newer sense. Here something must dawn upon us all. We all want to get *around* the cross. But do we not already surmise something of the fact that precisely those who are healthy, those who have two legs, those mighty and powerful on earth are the ones who are leading this world to destruction? Healing and wholeness come to us from an altogether different source; healing will come to us from those who sacrifice and are sacrificed. Everything hinges on this—that this truth will break forth and out among us.

We are all too strong in ourselves to become really weak before God, so that he can be strong in us in the power of his forgiveness. This is the strength of the humble and small and, as such, the beginning of the new life to which Jesus calls us. "Whosoever humbles himself as this little child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Therefore, "if you do not turn and become as children. . . ."

Salvation—A Modern Definition

By Samuel Harkness

Sirs, what must I do to be saved? . . . Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. Acts 16:30, 31.

ONE question arises daily in a thousand different forms: we say to our industrialists, merchants, educators, lawyers, physicians, journalists, research workers and clergymen, What shall we do to be saved? The answers to this question evoke the highest skill, richest experience, best philosophy, scientific labor, and creative genius of mankind. In fact, the level of civilization and the rate of progress depend upon the quality of the answers to the varying forms of this question. And I suppose that such answer as the apostles made might be considered no longer valid, if we did not rescue the meaning from the stereotype. Belief in Christ means belief in the quality and desirability of the aims and values for which Christ stands—an immense difference, as we shall see. For when we speak of Christ we cannot confine ourselves to the historic Jesus, but must think of him as the ever-changing symbol of our growing ethical knowledge and expanding moral purpose. And after all, what do we mean by salvation—personal release and aggrandizement, or the highest good for the largest number?

POSITIVE SALVATION

Belief which issues in salvation is, first, a transfer from the frantic desire to escape consequences to a passion for moral congruity. The question as it appears in our text had to do with escape from physical consequences; the answer had to do with a totally different conception and use of life. The man of the text belonged to a system of cruelty to which he had not been merely acquiescent, but from which he had directly profited. The concrete illustration of that cruelty was before him in the tortured persons of the apostles. Throughout history, and even until now, the most baffling problem lies in the tearing of men loose from systems of injustice and cruelty that they may believe and be saved. Who was it wrote

> In the cross of Christ I glory,
> Towering o'er the wrecks of time?

Sir John Bowring. Who was he? He was the British governor-general at Hong Kong at the time when the British empire was forcing the opium traffic on China. and he was the agent of that policy. And who wrote

> How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
> In a believer's ear?

John Newton. And who was he? He ran a slave ship between Africa and the slave markets of the western hemisphere. He wrote in his diary that he had never known sweeter or more frequent hours of divine communion than while on some of his slave journeys, and every Sunday he read the church liturgy to his crew twice, at the morning service and at evensong, with the

moans and stench of a doomed humanity coming up to his ears and nostrils from the ship's hold. I do not know whether the man of our text found it compatible with his belief to lash any more prisoners upon their bare backs and then rub salt in their wounds, but I do know that in the light of our modern ethics and social conscience it is impossible for men to be saved by faith in Jesus unless they carry the full measure of his spirit into every moral implication of their daily experiences. Belief in Jesus is drastic, revolutionary, and the issue must be moral congruity. Belief unto salvation is first of all a terrible sincerity, probing into every pus-pocket of individual and social inconsistency.

And, second, there must be a transfer from morbid

SAMUEL HARKNESS

preoccupation with self to an objective social concern. If you have read the journal of Gamaliel Bradford, you will remember how introspective he was, and how gloomy. Perhaps that is why he rose to his greatest literary height in the psychographs of "Damaged Souls." Despite his amazing genius, everything he wrote has a sick-room smell about it. And many who do not suffer his frailty of health literally taint the atmosphere with a despair which roots in self-distrust. One such was speculating recently on how long it would be before ants would take over the dominion of the earth from men. Now the successful attack upon morbidity is not logic, else we would recommend Huxley's book on "Ants" and then his "Biology of Human Nature." The only way to deal with a morbid and enervating preoccupation with self is to get the person concerned to pitch the stake of his interest outside himself; to put others first is the finest brain medicine known to man. The most precious freedom in this world is to be free from one's self, and that freedom may best be attained by an absorbing concern for others.

In the third place, there must be a transfer from naive reliance upon miracles to the test of one's own capacities. John Dewey, writing in the Yale Review, says: "Men have never used the powers they possess to advance the good in life, because they have waited upon some power external to themselves and to nature to do the work they are responsible for doing. Dependence upon an external power is the counterpart of surrender of human endeavor." There is nothing new about this kind of heroic thinking. Long ago the Almighty said to Moses: "Why callest thou upon me? Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward." And any explanation of the meaning of the death of Christ upon the cross which invites men to say, "Jesus paid it all; all to him I owe," and think they do not have to expiate their own sins and bear their own crosses is not only false but vicious. God is in the world eagerly and powerfully cooperating with all who use themselves to the utmost, but he will rob no man of the strength and joy which comes only through struggle and sacrifice.

HOW BELIEVE TODAY?

But how may we believe in an age made disbelieving under the pressure of a prolonged series of tragic events, of scientific facts and mechanical techniques unbalanced by appropriate and complementary values and attitudes, and of an abnormal psychology which either gnaws its own wounds like an animal or searches the heavens for a sign like a savage? By creating a philosophy for today which is not an intellectual hand-me-down from medieval or Victorian habits and outlooks. Such a philosophy must and may be premised upon that reasoning which assumes the entirety from fragments. Last summer one of my sons brought home a knapsack full of potsherds he gathered from the ruins of the cliff-dwellers on the Ute reservation. Some of the most fascinating hours of my vacation were spent trying to fit these fragments to each other and imagining the size, contours and designs the jars and bowls had when they were fashioned by deft brown fingers nine centuries ago. Thus, and precisely thus, we may determine the spiritual universe from the physical and the reality of God from the nature of man.

There are two ways of living—one a hand-to-mouth experience, spiritually, in which there is no stretching of imagination, no storing of vitality, no ripening fruit of distinguished personality upon the boughs of time. Perhaps this way of life was epitomized by a rather melancholy saint of my early ministry who testified in every prayer meeting to "just taking life as it is and making the best of it." If man has learned how to travel against the wind and current and even gravity he should be able to make life what he wants it to be, writing his own ticket of excellence. Let us choose a way of life based upon the realization of vast and successive curves of economic determinism across the pages of history. From time to time these curves sweep sharply down, and just when we think they are trailing off into nothingness, we find them reestablished, sublimated by a brighter dream and moving forward in a still higher arc. The curve which charts our own experience of life really began in the great explorations of the western hemisphere and the affirmations of democracy and religious liberty.

Sweeping sharply downward during the last few years from heights of mechanical ingenuity and organization not previously achieved, we are now afraid it will be lost in the fears and confusions of men. But if the spirit of man can be encouraged by heroic faith, we shall have a new sublimation and the curve will sweep up and on again under the impulses of economic justice, political sanity and racial good will.

COOPERATION THE KEY

Last week Bach's Mass in B Minor was presented by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Apollo Musical Club as a memorial to Theodore Thomas. There was purposeful integration producing a glory beyond the reach of any single instrument or voice. And I thought—life must be like this, a rhythmic weaving of every particular gift into the fabric of material and spiritual progress. Not new techniques but new attitudes of self-submerging cooperation will thrust us up and forward again. I suppose that every participant in that event had been a soloist at some time or other, but life is ultimately a chorus and when we achieve what Henry James called "a participating and contributing view of life," our salvation is corporate and richer.

Many have wandered long in the fog of religious theory and still cry out mournfully and with small hope, What shall I do to be saved? The answer is: Forget yourself by finding something greater than yourself and then using yourself unsparingly in its behalf! Great poetry is written only when the poet is possessed by a strange kind of ecstasy, his personality becoming the unconscious vehicle of art.

So that finally this question, "What shall I do to be saved?" is not asked in feebleness and terror, but out of the passion for a completed life. By allowing my desire for my salvation to be absorbed in your desire for your salvation, I am saved, and the cross—no longer a mystery—becomes the symbol of belief in the possible destiny of man and the limitless love of God.

Christ's Borrowings

By William Bishop Gates

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. . . . He was wounded for our transgressions. . . . And with his stripes we are healed. . . . He shall see of the travail of his soul . . . and shall be satisfied. Isaiah 53:4, 5, 11.

WHAT had Jesus that he could count as his own? What had he that he wanted to count as his own? What that he might have counted as his own, did he keep for himself?

The manger in which he was laid was not his, in the same fashion as the silken couch of some bedouin chieftain's little son was the possession of the new born heir as soon as he was laid in it. He borrowed a place to be laid when he was born on that first Christmas morning. Neither stable, nor stall, nor manger were his. Nor, toward the end of his life, when he rode in triumph into the clamorous but fickle city, was he seated upon a caparisoned charger from some royal stable that he owned. No, he borrowed the humble beast whereon in humility he sat as he "came unto his own" and found that, after all, "his own received him not."

Have you ever wondered how Jesus repaid such borrowings as these! Do you suppose he did repay them? How? In money? In kind? But you do suppose, don't you, that somehow those who had loaned, no matter how humble it might be, something to Jesus for his use, found a return of some sort that proved to be a far deeper satisfaction than any that a material compensation could bring?

He borrowed because he had need; he borrowed because he had not that which he could count as his own; he borrowed knowing that it was not the mere return of quid pro quo which would bring, to those who had supplied him in his time of need, their deepest satisfaction; but that it would be the added life, the enhanced sense of service rendered that would give the satisfaction that can come only from life abundant.

HOW JESUS REPAID

Was it not a gracious winning method, too, that Jesus used, when he fed the five thousand? Surely he who could so multiply the bread could just as well have created it. But no, Jesus borrowed the bread from a little lad who had five pieces of thin flat Syrian bread—little loaves—and two small fishes. Jesus had need, so had the boy; he was hungry, too, but he sacrificed his own needs to Jesus' borrowing. Did that little lad go without any reward? Nay verily! All his life long it was his boast that he had loaned all he had to Christ and that then—springing from his meager, but joyous, gift—he saw the miracle of the satisfying of a multitude. What sort of a reward would the giving back of five thin loaves and two fishes—just what he had loaned to Jesus—have been to that boy? To have had that kind of repayment of the loan would have been, for him, like being shoved outside and left without the right to feel that he had had any truly contributory part in the joy and exultation of feeding that great and needy multitude.

Jesus' borrowings are a gracious and tender compliment to the spirit of cooperation that is deep down in the breast of every right-minded person.

Were Jesus but to borrow from me those things which I think I need for myself but which, because of his asking, I decide I would prefer to have him use, because "he hath need of them," should I miss my deeper reward? Will Jesus repay me just the half hour that I spent to visit that sick child? Will he give me back exactly the thirty-five cents that I spent to feed a starving mother? I think if he did, I too should feel as sorely defrauded as that little lad would have felt had he found in his basket again just five pieces of thin flat Syrian bread and two small fishes.

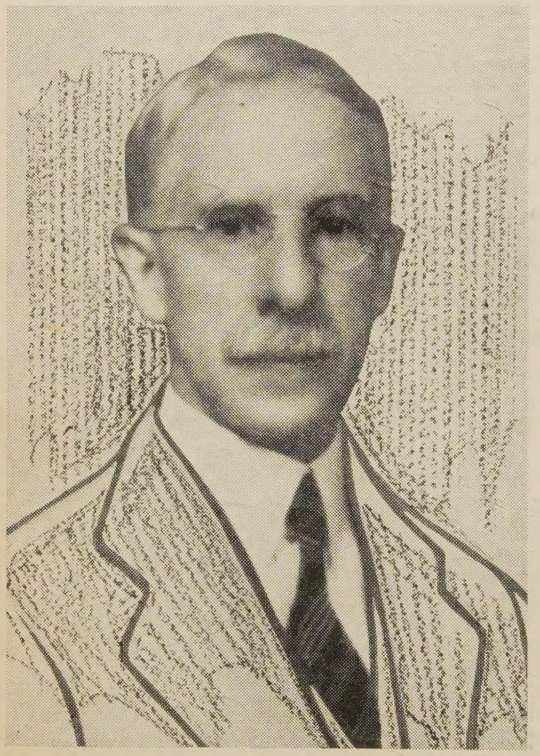
No, Jesus' borrowings are repaid to us always in values far more precious than anything we lend to him; he repays in satisfactions inward, in the sense of cooperation with the strongest, tenderest influences that the human heart can harbor, with the influences that are infinite and eternal in their scope and power. What

higher reward could a man ask for than to know, from some concrete act of giving, lending to Christ, that he is a cooperator with God?

Would you prefer the five loaves back again, or does your heart still leap with joy at the thought of the privilege you had in giving, unselfishly, for Christ's sake for the need of others?

PARTNERS WITH GOD

Is not that a better reward? Is not that a sort of crown upon your life—that, that time at least, you were a partner with God? That is a "crown of glory that fadeth not away." Perhaps it was a crown won by sacrifice—it ought to be; but if it was, it is also a crown like the one Jesus wore—one with thorns. "He shall



William Bishop Gates

see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied"; so it was said of the suffering servant, and when I think of that, then I softly hum to myself—thinking of him, and then of myself—"How shall I follow him I serve, how shall I copy him I love; nor from those blessed footsteps swerve that lead me to my home above?"

Jesus had no rostrum, to which crowds habitually assembled; early in his ministry, he was sometimes invited to speak in the synagogue when he went to worship, but only as a sort of favor. He had no prerogatives; there was no cathedral pulpit reserved for him; he did not belong to any priestly class. When he needed a pulpit, he borrowed Peter's fishing boat and they shoved off far enough so that most of the crowd could see him; or else, he sat down near the top of some little hillock and the attentive listeners stood crowded just below him. He had no abiding pulpit, only a borrowed one—whether it was a borrowed boat or a borrowed hillside field.

And likewise, he had no abiding home. Not so much as "a place to lay his head"; but that was a memorable day for Mary, Martha and Lazarus, at Bethany, when Jesus came and borrowed a room in their house for his resting place.

JESUS' LAST BORROWINGS

Did Peter begrudge his boat? Did the farmer begrudge his field? Did the Bethany home feel itself overcrowded? Why, the very wavelets lapped at the sides of Peter's boat the more joyously because they were helping to uphold Jesus' rocking pulpit; why, the very flowers nodded acquiescence to every word of the sermon that was spoken over their heads from that sunshiny, breeze-cooled pulpit on the hillside; why, Bethany's very walls radiated welcome when he who loved those three crossed the threshold. The reward of his words, the reward of his very presence, were blessings enough, as long as they might only listen to him, as long as he would only remain.

These things—a pulpit and a chamber—he borrowed! But ah, the blessing, the repayment, that he brought—and that he left behind.

And then, when came the days of unleavened bread, it is reported that the Master "sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover that we may eat. . . . And ye shall say unto the goodman of the house, the Master saith unto thee, 'Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?' And he shall show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready." It was a borrowed room in which his passion began, with borrowed furnishings within it. And there, when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. Borrowed, borrowed, borrowed—but oh what blessed borrowing! What infinite values brooded there! What a world drama was concentrated within those listening walls! Suppose Jesus had had no friend there from whom he might have asked, "Where is a guestchamber where I may eat the passover with my disciples?" Would those blessed words of love to his disciples, and that prayer when he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour is come"—would they never have been uttered?

"IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME"

But there *was* the friend; there *was* the guestchamber; there was the gathering of the twelve with their beloved Master about the table of the last supper. "And he said unto them, with desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." "And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he brake it and said, Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you. This do in remembrance of me."

After the same manner also he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood: This do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."

What he borrowed was owned by others, but what he gave was his own life, "a ransom for many." "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. . . . He was wounded for our transgressions. . . . And with his stripes we are healed. . . . He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied."

They borrowed a bed to lay His head when
Christ the Lord came down;
They borrowed the ass in the mountain pass for
Him to ride to town;
But the Crown that He wore and the Cross that
He bore, were His own.

He borrowed the bread when the crowd He fed
on the grassy mountain side;
He borrowed the dish of broken fish with which
He satisfied;
But the Crown that He wore and the Cross that
He bore, were His own.

He borrowed the ship in which to sit to talk to
the multitude.
He borrowed the nest in which to rest, He had
never a home so crude;
But the Crown that He wore and the Cross that
He bore, were His own.

He borrowed a room on His way to the tomb—
the Passover lamb to eat;
They borrowed a cave for Him a grave; they
borrowed a winding sheet;
But the Crown that He wore and the Cross that
He bore, were His own.

The thorns on His head were worn in my stead;
for me the Savior died;
For the guilt of my sin, the nails drove in, when
Him they crucified;
Though the Crown that He wore and the Cross
that He bore, were His own.

Jesus and Christianity

By Buell G. Gallagher

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Luke 6:46.

THERE is a difference between Jesus and Christianity. That difference has sometimes been put into the two phrases: "The religion *of* Jesus; and the religion *about* Jesus." The religion of Jesus he incarnated. The religion about Jesus the more or less devout centuries have created, adding to the original much that was not there, sometimes distorting it beyond recognition. There is as great a difference between Jesus' own religion and that of institutional Christianity as there is between the crystal spring of the headwaters and the muddy meandering of the lower river. The water at the source comes bubbling from beneath a great rock, clear and cold. Downstream it is muddied and polluted.

We are told that we should drink from this muddy river, because the water from the spring is in it. There is so much else that is also in it! Look at the flow of Christianity, and see how, in the passing of the centuries, corrupting influences have poured their muddied streams into its once clear water, how obstructions have through the years been thrown across its stream—how little it resembles the sparkling vivacity of the well-spring!

I

At the fountain-head the religion of Jesus is simple, non-creedal, undogmatic. It is concerned with what he called the kingdom of God; but God, the King, is a Father, not a tyrant; and all persons in the kingdom are to live as brothers in the family of God the Father. All the theology Jesus needed in his religion was expressed in one pregnant phrase, "Our Father who art in heaven." He never wrote a book on theology. He never drew up a creed. The religion of Jesus is simple, non-creedal, undogmatic.

But look how the waters are muddied in the religion *about* Jesus! Almost before the stream began to flow, Paul put his foot into it. He stirred up the sands of Greek philosophy to cloud the clear water. He busied himself with influencing the direction of its flow. How many well-meaning busybodies since his time have used him as the example, as they have messed about in the stream with their own particular paddles and spades, each adding his share to the increasing muddying of the waters. There were the Montanists and the Gnostics, the Sabellians and the Arians, trampling madly up and down the bed of the stream, each insisting that it ought to be dammed up at a different point, and its waters diverted in this or that direction. In 325 A.D. they finally succeeded in erecting the particular dam called the Nicene creed, by the simple process (figuratively speaking) of drowning all who would not agree to build the dam the orthodox way. In three short centuries the change was effected from the free, natural, undogmatic, noncreedal religion of Jesus, to the involved, fixed, unflexible, dogmatic, creedal religion *about* him.

Listen to Basil of Cappadocia as he defends the creed, muddying the waters with his oar: "Many, not distinguishing in theology the common substance from the hypostases, fall into the same fallacies and imagine that it makes no difference whether substance *(ousia)* or hypostasis be spoken of. Whence it has pleased some to admit without examination that if one substance then also one hypostasis should be affirmed. And on the other hand those who accept three hypostases think themselves compelled to confess an equal number of substances." Can this be related to the religion of Jesus? How muddied with non-essentials the waters have become! And the Nicene creed concludes by declaring anathema any persons who disagree with it. Having dammed up the waters of religion with the stonework of theological and factional creed-making, they damned to eternal damnation any who questioned the advisability of the new creed.

This process of obstructing the free flow of the river of religion by building creedal dams to stop the flow, or by dredging new theological channels to divert its course, is never completely successful. It may meet with success for a few seasons or a few centuries. Yet, there comes a time when the spring freshet, swollen by the rains far up in the eternal hills, refuses to let the waters of God be confined by man-made obstructions. Dams of theology and creed are burst. The glad torrent leaps to its new freedom, cutting new channels, flowing where it never went before, and leaving a trail of wreckage to mark the spot where complacent squatters rested in

the shelter of their structures of creed and dogma for many years, vainly thinking that they had permanently shackled the stream of living water. Such a flood came with the reformation. Another such flood seems now overdue. At the fountain-head, the religion of Jesus was simple, non-creedal, undogmatic.

II

A second contrast between the religion of Jesus and the religion built up *about* him lies in the difference between a vital and a formal faith.

We know what Jesus thought of the religious people of his day who gave their whole attention to carrying out the minutiae of the letter of the law while forgetting the spirit. They called down upon themselves his sevenfold denunciation of pettiness and hypocrisy. Their name, "Pharisee," which then signified a very devout and pious sect, is now synonymous with "hypocrite." Formalism is not the vital religion of Jesus.

And the religion *about* Jesus? It reverses the order. Go to church and Sunday school, pay your pledge regularly, support the organizations of the church, be mildly enthusiastic about its charities and benevolences—in short, go through the motions, keep yourself on the list of regular members in good standing, and the church will never question you. For the church is concerned not so much with the vital religion of Jesus as with the observance of the forms of the religion about Jesus. The bubbling spring is locked beneath wintry ice. The frozen assets of religion must be thawed out of the ice of formalism which confines them. It is time for that spring thaw.

III

Take another contrast between the religion of Jesus and the religion about Jesus—the difference between an ethical and an institutional religion.

Jesus built no elaborate organization. With his little band of personal friends, he stood in sharp contrast to organized religion. All the organization he seemed to contemplate was summed up in his invitation, "Follow me." There is but one reference to the organizing of a church in all that is preserved to us of his teaching. In that incident, Jesus places reliance not upon organization or ecclesiastical structure, not upon massive buildings or mass movements, but solely upon the invincible integrity of God-possessed character. Looking at one of his friends and followers, he declared that this man had an unshakable character, "and upon *this* rock will I build my church." Jesus was not one who built great institutions.

He was concerned with something far more important, more fundamental, more lasting and enduring, than organization and buildings. Always he emphasized the importance of right living. Always his demands were ethical. Men worship in the great Temple—yes, but unless they are first on ethical terms with their brothers, their worship is unacceptable to God! At the very altar, if a man remembers that any man has anything against him, he is to postpone the act of devotion, and to go, first to be reconciled to his brother, before he can adore his Father. Jesus demands, not buildings and statistics, but right living. Not institutional, but ethical, is the religion of Jesus.

And the religion about Jesus? Once again men are looking through the wrong end of the telescope. The true perspective is reversed. A man says: "I want to come to the church for help in living according to the golden rule." He applies for membership, and is questioned about his theology and his beliefs on the minutiae of religion! Abraham Lincoln said he would join a church if one could be found which made its sole requirement for admission to membership the acceptance of the two great commandments of love for God and love for men. Lincoln died without having become a church member. On every side, the churches lift up their hands in prayer to God. On every hand the churches stridently seek to exalt the name of Christ.

Buell G. Gallagher

Peace! If for a moment we still our clamor, we may hear his quiet voice saying: "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

But the churches do not hear. We are too busy building up institutional strength and consolidating gains already made. We are too busy competing along denominational lines. We are engrossed in watching the wheels of institutionalism go 'round and 'round.

Men have seen that there was power pent up behind creedal and dogmatic dams, and they have used that tremendous power to turn the machinery of institutionalism. It is like harnessing Niagara to run a hundred thousand peanut-roasters. If that were the best we could do with this power, it were well that we had the spring freshet to sweep away the obstructing dams of creed and dogma, carrying institutionalism with them.

IV

But there is an alternative. It may be that we have a great power which we can use for something besides

the peanut-roasters of a sectarian religion about Jesus. It ought not to be completely impossible to use the present forms of religion for something other than ignoble ends.

At least two current attempts are being made which do not, however, give great promise. There are some, for example, who try to go "back to Jesus." They have laid a pipeline back to the spring, and have attempted to bring the spring water down the hills and across the valleys of 1900 years of tepid history. Then they have advertised: "Drink here! The only direct pipeline straight from the source!" But the water that comes out of the chromium-plated tap is not like the bubbling spring and moss-rimmed pool. It is lukewarm and tastes badly of the pipe. The "back to Jesus" movement is a piece of sentimental and romantic moonbeam chasing. Jesus will not be found 'back there somewhere." He is way out ahead of us, leading the way into the future. The effort to recapture the lost radiance of religion by harking back across the centuries is foredoomed to failure. The pipeline is not noticeably superior to a muddy river.

There are others who suggest that since the stream of Christianity is muddied, we had better get another spring "just as good." Some of them dig a well, pump their own water into their artificially created river-bed, and invite us to depend upon the water supplied by them. "At least," they tell us, "it is temporarily less polluted." But suppose the pump fails? Or the well runs dry? Or factionalism begins to muddy that stream, too? I am quite unmoved by the hubbub of the mushroom sects which spring up all around. They will have their little day and cease to be.

CLEAN THE RIVER!

The slogan—if we must have a slogan—is not "Back to the old spring," nor "Find a new spring." One is impossible, the other ultimately disappointing. Our job is not that of running pipelines from the headwaters, nor of finding new sources; our job is to purge the river, clean it of obstructions and pollution, and make the present stream of religion as clean and as pure and as lifegiving as the clear, sparkling headwaters. "Clean the river!"

How? The least we can do is to eliminate artificial restrictions on its flow. We can let it follow its intended channels through the valleys of ethical living, rather than siphoning it over the mountains of hypocrisy to irrigate the valley of sin. And we can keep the river free from contamination along its course. Take just one example.

Consider the way in which the pure waters of the religion of Jesus have been diverted by the religion about Jesus, to contaminate religion with militarism. It was not until the reign of Marcus Aurelius (161-180 A.D.) that any Christian thought of enlisting in the army after his conversion; and with one or two possible exceptions, no soldier, up to that time, joined the church and remained a soldier after his conversion. Professor Harnack listed the following ethical barriers in the way of Christians who might have contemplated service in the army: "'The shedding of blood on the battlefield, the use of torture in the law courts, the passing of death sentences by officers and the execution of them by common soldiers, the unconditional military oath, the all-pervading worship of the emperor, the sacrifices in which all were expected to participate, the average behavior of soldiers in peacetime, and other idolatrous and offensive customs." Until the reign of Marcus Aurelius, Christians did not join the army.

Listen to Justin Martyr, in a letter written to an earlier emperor of Rome, Antoninus Pius (about 150 A.D.). Because of the work of Christian missionaries who are converting others to their belief, "we who formerly slew one another not only do not make war against our enemies, but, for the sake of not telling lies or deceiving those who examine us, gladly die confessing Christ." That is the stream from the living spring —the religion of Jesus, pure and undefiled.

OUR CESSPOOL CIVILIZATION

We have no need to rehearse the story of the muddying of the waters. In the reign of Marcus Aurelius, men began to construct a ditch through the backyard of Mars, and to build a dam of nationalism to divert the waters of religion through that backyard ditch of militarism. Mars and his henchmen wanted the clean refreshing water to drink; and they wanted to use the river, after they had drunk from it, to carry away the putrifying sewage of their enterprise. Now, some men would say that the thing to do is to pipe the water around this place of pollution. Others would say, "Find another spring." But we say, "Clean the river!" We can blast away the obstructing dam of nationalism, dig again the old, unused channels of peace and love, and drink once more of sweet water.

The world appears to many to be tottering on the brink of warfare. It behooves us, if we want the followers of Jesus to have the sweet, life-giving water of the gospel of peace, to keep those waters from being sluiced through the ditches of Mars. More than ten thousand of us, ministers in the churches of the nation, have declared that we will never support a war. Our church council enunciates its ideal in unequivocal terms when it says: "The Church of Christ as an institution shall not be used as an instrument or an agency in support of war." Yes, it may be that we shall be able to clear the river!

Oh my friends! How long will we allow the pure water of religion to be diverted through the backyards and alleyways of a cesspool civilization? How long will we seek to avoid our real job by claiming to pipe the water directly from the source? Or shall we now bend every effort to clean the river, and to restore it to its natural channels, that its waters may flow through the broad bosom of this earth, cleansing and refreshing, a life-giving stream? "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

Is This the End?

IS this the end? I know it cannot be.
Our ships shall sail upon another sea;
New islands yet shall break upon our sight,
New continents of love and truth and light.

JOHN W. CHADWICK.

Pacific School of Religion Berkeley, Calif.

The Angry Tree

By Herbert Booth Smith

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Acts 5:30.

IN Idaho there grows a species of acacia tree which is classed as one of the wonders of plant life. The tree attains a height of only eight feet, so that it is not remarkable for its size. But it is remarkable in that it seems to be sensitive to assault. When night comes, it coils its leaves together and curls its twigs to the shape of pigtails. After it has settled itself for its night's sleep—so it is said—if it is touched, it will flutter as if agitated or impatient at the disturbance. The oftener it is molested, the more violent the shaking of the branches. Finally, if the shaking is continued, the tree emits a nauseating aroma sufficient to inflict a headache on the disturber. This tree is called the "angry tree."

"The Angry Tree"—what a theme for a sacramental service! For I suppose if Calvary's tree could have spoken, it would have been angered at the use which men had made of it. We need not commit ourselves to the view held by some philosophers that trees and plants and all growing things have souls. The younger Darwin held that plants in their way could think, and this strange story from Idaho would suggest that trees can exhibit emotion. But without signing our names to this creed, we can let the reverent imagination dwell on the fact that men took a growing tree and killed it in order to make it form a means of agony to the Son of God.

Gerald Gould has put the thought in an unforgettable way:

> There was a bright and happy tree; the wind
> with music laced its boughs,
> Thither across the houseless sea came singing
> birds to house.
>
> Man grudged the tree its happy eves, its happy
> dawns of eager sound;
> So all that crown and tower of leaves, they
> leveled with the ground.
>
> They made an upright of the stem, a crosspiece
> of a bough they made;
> No shadow of their deed on them the fallen
> branches laid.
>
> But blithely, since the year was young, when they
> a fitting hill did find,
> There on the happy tree they hung the Savior of
> mankind.

Gerald Gould calls it the "happy" tree. Maybe it was happy when it was born, but how did it feel when the Savior of men was nailed to it, and his precious blood stained its sides? It must have wanted to tear itself apart, so that the nails which held him captive would be powerless to keep him there. I sympathize with the tree. Artists say that the angular form of the cross is at war with every principle of beauty. Men had no right to make a thing so ugly out of a thing so beautiful. The tree didn't want to be cruel. Perhaps it had given shade and fruit while it lived, to the casual passer-by. What would it not have given to the very Savior of the world? And yet it stood helpless on Calvary, transformed into rack and thumbscrew against its wooden will.

I wonder if you would like to know where the tree came from, on which the Savior died? Well, it is only a legend, but I like the suggestion and wish it were true. "Tree" is of course a poetic name for the cross of Christ, which occurs some five times in the New Testament; but never in the Gospels. Josephus says the name originated from the practice of employing a tree in case of haste for the purpose of crucifixion, but in medieval times it was explained by a quaint legend. It is said that as Adam lay dying he sent his son, Seth, to the angel that guarded Paradise, to carve a bough from the Tree

Herbert Booth Smith

of Life. The angel gave it and Seth carried it to his father, but found him dead; whereupon he planted the bough upon his grave. In course of time, when Solomon was building the temple, the tree was cut down, but it refused to be fitted into any part of the building and was placed over a stream to serve as a bridge. By and by the Queen of Sheba came with her gifts and offerings. When she saw the bridge she refused to walk over it since she foresaw that the Redeemer of the world would suffer on it. Long afterward the Jews took it and cast it into a stagnant pool, which derived a miraculous virtue from its presence. In fact it gave healing to those who stepped in after an angel had troubled the pool. There it remained until the time of our Lord's passion, when it was taken out of the pool and fashioned into the cross on which he suffered.

Here is the arresting thought: that if this were true, the tree of life of Eden was also the tree of life of Calvary; for that which brought death to our Lord brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. This

idea was cherished by some of the old church fathers like St. Jerome. They loved to contrast the first tree whose fruit brought death into the world with the second tree whose leaves were for the healing of the nations.

Let us glance for a moment at the happy tree of life in Eden, and then at the angry tree of life at Calvary.

I.

The tree of life in the Garden of Eden.

Let us look into this strange story which some interpret as myth, some as history and some as allegory. Without committing ourselves as to our interpretation, what does the narrative say? The tree of life, we are told, was in the midst of the Garden; and its fruit was such as to produce physical immortality. This is a tale, not of two cities, as the novelist would have it, but of two trees, as Moses would have it. Our first parents, according to the narrative, partook of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. As a result of that experiment, the sinful tendency was implanted in their natures and the man and woman were driven forth from the Garden lest they should eat of the other tree and live forever. Now why did God wish them to let that tree alone? Was he selfish in his own desire for immortality and wanted to deny it to others? That misses the whole point of it. The idea seems to be that if this first human couple, in their sinful condition, should become immortal, it would be an unspeakable calamity to them and their posterity. For sinful beings to live forever upon the earth would be disastrous, for the redemption of the race would then be almost impossible. Earth would soon have become a hell, with sin propagating itself forever. To prevent such a possibility, the man and woman were driven forth from the enclosure, and Cherubim were placed at the entrance to prevent their return. Man therefore failed at the outset to gain physical immortality. His first chance at the tree of life was lost. Immortality must be reached in some other way.

Now, span the years in the twinkling of an eye. It is a far cry from Eden to Calvary and yet they have a very intimate relationship, the one with the other. The tragedy of the one is the reason for the tragedy of the other. Something went wrong with man in the first Garden of the Bible, and that something was righted in the last Garden. The first Adam got into trouble in the Garden of Eden. The second Adam got into trouble in the Garden of Gethsemane—but oh, how different the trouble! Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained—that is the sequence of the two Trees and two Gardens.

II.

The tree of life in God's Garden of Calvary.

God's intervention in the early day was a great mercy to the human race. He showed man then that immortality in sin was an impossible thing. The happy tree in the garden was undisturbed. But Calvary, the hill of the angry tree, made immortality possible through redemption. The life man lost through one tree has been made possible through another.

We Californians, whenever we think of trees, instinctively turn in memory to the redwoods, for they are the biggest trees in the world. Some of them are so large that it takes thirty people with arms outstretched to reach around them. But the most interesting thing about them is the way they heal their own hurts. Whenever a redwood is burnt, the tree is able to grow a new skin or bark over the injured part and it goes right on living. May not that remind us of the fact that Calvary's tree covered up the hurt done to Eden's tree—a proffered gift instead of a stolen blessing.

But perhaps the supreme thing about the redwood is what happens when it dies or is cut down. In Muir's Woods near San Francisco they show the tourist the stump of a tree which was a sapling when Solomon was on the throne. It is said that the tree has been dead over a thousand years. But what has taken place? All around that ancient stump of the old tree are young redwoods growing out of the stub. The guide tells all visitors that is the way the redwoods pass themselves on to the world. They do not produce any young redwoods till they die. When they pass, a whole circle of trees springs up to take the place of the one which is gone.

Does not this remind us of the redwood of Calvary? The tree of death became a tree of life. When the Master passed from the scene of action, his disciples sprang up to take his place, and they are carrying on his work in the world today. Perhaps this was what Jesus had in mind when he said, "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

> O cross that liftest up my head,
> I dare not ask to fly from thee;
> I lay in dust life's glory dead,
> And from the ground there blossoms red
> Life that shall endless be.

After Freedom—What?

By Edwin Ewart Aubrey

You . . . grumbled in your tents, and said, It is because the Lord hates us that he has brought us out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites, that they may destroy us. Our fellow-countrymen have made us lose heart. . . . Ye would not trust the Lord your God, who had gone ahead of you on the road, to look for a place for you to pitch tents. Deuteronomy 1:26-28,33.

THERE is no greater word in our modern vocabulary than freedom. The typical celebration of our American life is the celebration of independence. If there is any one thing of which the modern man is proud, it is of his emancipation. We celebrate our emancipation from ignorance, prudery and prejudice. We issue loud declarations of independence from parental control, from traditional social and moral restraints, from religious dogmatism. We proclaim our freedom from geographic isolation and from domination by the physical world. At the World's Fair, in the home, in the laboratory, in countless novels we announce our freedom. But after freedom—what?

I

Well, for most of us, after freedom—misery. At heart we are profoundly discontented and unhappy. We are forced to admit to ourselves that emancipation has not brought us greater contentment. Indeed we have lost the security we had. Our text is a parable. The Hebrews in the story which forms our scripture lesson had come up out of Egypt, a great and difficult emancipation. Their future seemed unlimited; their leaders brought back glowing reports of the land into which they might enter; and they threw out a glorious challenge to the people to go forward and possess it. And what did the people say? They said, "Our fellow-countrymen have made us lose heart"! They grumbled in their tents. After all, Egyptian slavery had furnished a reasonably safe and quiet existence; and Palestine offered turmoil. And whether it is Egypt against a land of mere promise, an old deal against the "new deal," isolation against the complex social relations of an international scene, traditional certainties against independent thought, Victorian morals against contemporary ethical confusion, there is always a sacrifice of security at the heart of every freedom. The free man is always insecure; and when the tumult and the shouting dies, he finds himself unhappy.

FINDING NEW FREEDOM

An oppressed group can always maintain its solidarity. When freedom comes the social bonds are broken, the *esprit de corps* dissolves. The years of anarchy that followed 1776 are witness. Every emancipation is a breaking of fellowships, both with those whose views we earlier shared and with the other rebels who abandoned those views. And every broken fellowship is a breach within ourselves that causes hidden pain. And when the shouts are over and the freedom won we come back to ourselves to face our loss.

No one is more distrustful of himself than he who has been freed. When we go away to college how inadequate we feel! What confusion besets us when we are first given a free hand! There is nothing like emancipation to discover our weakness. So easily can we pass from freedom to failure that we may often take to brooding on our inadequacies and lose all confidence. These latter years have shown how quickly the new freedom may lead to pessimism about human nature. Emancipation and pessimism are twins.

Because every achievement of independence is also a weakening of inner bonds, periods of emancipation are also periods of personal disorganization. The old familiar meanings of life are lost and until the new meanings of life are formulated we find ourselves at sea. This is the curse which has been visited upon our young people today. It is the curse which every generation passes on, sometimes to the third and fourth generation of its descendants. There is grave danger that these disorganized persons may reorganize themselves on a lower level and become degenerate. For freedom carries no automatic guarantee of progress: this we have learned since Herbert Spencer blithely wrote of progress irresistible and Browning smeared bland optimistic sauce upon our bitter fruit of freedom. The emancipated may become the damned; and knowing this they tremble. Our freedom may make cowards of us all.

Beset by insecurity, by broken fellowships, by loss of confidence, by the awful perils of inner dissolution, the free may cry out in the bitterness of disillusionment, "It is because the Lord hates us that he has brought us out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites, that they may destroy us." For many this is a bugle call that sounds retreat: they would have us go back behind nineteenth century sentimentalism to eighteenth century rationalism, or behind that to seventeenth century piety, or further back to the stability of the Middle Ages, or to the early days of the church, or

Edwin Ewart Aubrey

to the glory that was found in Greece. For others it is naught but resentment, a paralyzing filibuster upon thought.

II

These are the terrors of freedom. They are not new. They are as old as every emancipation that mankind has known. History gives little comfort that we can escape them.

When the Teutonic tribes freed themselves from Rome they abused her culture, but their emancipation plunged western Europe into the dark ages. When the scholastics made their superb attack on obscurantism, they freed themselves from a shallow administrative program, but they landed the church in a dreary dogmatism. When the giants of the Renaissance broke away from medieval asceticism they ushered in an age of sentimentalism sickly sweet. The Protestant reformers declared their independence from the regimentation of the Church of Rome, and promptly there ensued sectarian chaos, a rugged individualism of religious self-defeating strife. And when in the Enlightenment tolerance proclaimed man's freedom from sec-

tarian bitterness and reason rejoiced at its emancipation from pious ignorance, then quickly there ensued the age of popes when inspiration guttered and formalism leashed the powers of men. The nineteenth century science, magnificent offspring of the Enlightenment, found its demagogic spokesman in Thomas Huxley and announced that science was now free from mere philosophy; but now the tale is told in the superficiality of science as a guide to life.

Here we stand, heirs of this freedom. Are we among the damned? Damned by our impotence to use our freedom well? How many of us have said, "Life is a tale told by an idiot, signifying nothing"? How many of us are seized by what the French call *le cafard,* unutterable boredom, that shapeless darkness that besets the soul?

Freedom is a perennial problem, and the Christian church has written its history as a career in learning how to use freedom. That career is in Jesus seeking freedom from cult religion and finding that freedom only on a cross. It is in Paul escaping from the pale of the Jewish law and dedicating himself to the proposition that in Christ all men are brothers. It is in the imperial church freed from Roman persecution to seek a Christian basis for the Roman empire. It is in the monks cutting themselves off from a worldly communion, and working out a foundation for the criticism of human culture. It is in the wandering friars moving out of the monastery and its quiet into the turmoil of the world again, trying to revive the faith of men in that which worldly troubles leave untouched. It is in Martin Luther nailing his declaration of independence to cathedral doors, his independence from the papal see, so as to find for German men a clearer religious basis for national life in all its parts. It is in liberalism moving beyond the confines of pre-scientific faiths into a reinterpretation of the Christian way in terms of the insights which the sciences have brought.

In modern thought the superficial optimistic fallacy persists that freedom is happiness. This is the lesson Christianity has learned: that human nature cannot stand emancipation. In this very pessimism, this distrust of man, lies its value, for Christian thought has now a message for the disillusioned cynic.

III

The Christian message for our day is clear: freedom is not enough. Man is made for loyalty. "Our hearts

A Pastoral Prayer

By Frederick W. Norwood

O GOD, grant us the boon of a few moments' quiet that we may worship Thee. We would remove the shoes from off our feet and shake off the dust of the way, kneeling before Thee in the spirit, worshiping Thee in quietness of heart.

Thou art not like unto ourselves, we thank Thee for that. There are times when we grow weary of the contemplation of our humanity. We thank Thee that we may think of Thee in terms far beyond any that we can apply unto man. Thou art not the prisoner of time as we are. With Thee there is no beginning nor ending. We ourselves are transient, plodding like pilgrims across the little bit of the way between the two eternities, but ever Thou hast been with the children of men, their God, their Guide.

We thank Thee for the sense of continuity with those who have gone before us. We bless Thee for the seeds of life that have fallen into the hearts of men and brought forth fruit. We bless Thee for the word of the Testimony cherished in the hearts of Thy people of old, handed on to ourselves that we may in our turn pass it anew to others. We thank Thee for all the wistful hearts, the sweet singers, the prophetic souls who flourished under Thy grace. We thank Thee for the coming of the Christ in such sweet simplicity but in such fathomless power. We thank Thee that His hand has touched us, His voice has echoed in our hearts, His spirit has enfolded us in its warmth. We are His disciples—how frail God only knows, but still His disciples. His voice is ringing in the innermost chambers of our soul, and fain would we follow, fain would we love.

Grant us to believe in the future yet more exultantly than we believe in the past, for the future is not beyond Thy will nor untrodden by Thee, for Thou knowest all things from the beginning unto the end. Thou hast Thy way, Thy truth stands and as Thou hast been the Guide of men in the past so wilt Thou be their Guide in the future. Grant unto each of us to turn our faces exultantly toward the Unknown. There are times when the shadows lift and we look over the long pathway we have trodden and we know Thou hast been with us. Thou hast not failed us, and this day we can thank Thee that ever there has been a little measure of meal and a little oil in the house through the long years, and ever Thy grace has sustained and kept and gladdened.

So grant us to believe that Thou wilt ever be with us and to show the effulgence of our belief in our faces, in our character, in our spirit. Make us to be blithe spirits as we pass on our way through Thy wonderful world. We shall not pass this way again, then let us do what good we can as we pass, that perhaps even our shadow may make it a little cooler for some plant that is withering in the heat, and from our hands may there come forth truth and kindness, courage and patience.

Grant, we beseech Thee as we worship, that there may softly enfold us the grace of God. Each man and each woman needs Thee. Let our need prompt Thy supply and let Thy supply obliterate our need. Cause us to change our strength while we worship, put off the garment of sorrow and put on the garment of praise, take up our staff again with hands that are resolute, never doubting but what Thy grace will be sufficient for every coming circumstance, in the midst of every clashing battle and all along the way, until the shadows pass and the day dawn. All the way has Thy grace been with us. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

are restless until they find their rest in Thee," says Augustine. For God has made us for himself in whose service freedom is perfected. It is significant that Paul at the very beginning of those two great letters on freedom, the epistle to the Romans and the letter to the Galatians calls himself "a slave of Christ." And Luther who could proudly say, "The Christian man is master of all and servant of none," ends by saying, "The Christian man is servant of all and master of none." Freedom must lead to higher servitude.

THE ART OF SELF-FORGETTING

The emancipated man encounters a fatal dilemma. On the one hand freedom must be achieved within. No physical separation from the oppressor is really freedom. Do not the Jews of our own day still carry in their lives the marks of the ghetto, the attitudes of clannishness and pride which compensated them for Gentile chains across their city streets at dusk? Have not the new psychologists shown beyond peradventure of a doubt how parents' domination may continue in the child long after they are dead? The American colonies were politically separated from England in 1776 but our literature remained in serfdom for a hundred years, and our education still fails to win its independence. We are not freed merely by striking shackles from our wrists, not by loud defiance, nor by breaking communication with the person who holds us in thrall. We must win our freedom within. But then, the other psychological truth is that we carry our past with us. This is the curse of memory. This, then, is our dilemma. There is but one escape from this dilemma. The only solution lies in sacrifice.

Gautama Buddha with the psychological penetration so characteristic of him insisted that on the long road to salvation the last and hardest sacrifice for man to make is to forget himself. This is a hard lesson for our present generation to accept. Nurtured in nineteenth century optimism we still believe that freedom comes by easy stages and that in freedom victory is assured. There is no other way but sacrifice. The rich young ruler comes to Jesus and he asks the way to life eternal. What is the answer? "Go . . . sell all . . . give." The symbol of the cross stands firm. In international relations it means that we must sacrifice all national pride. The League of Nations conceived in the womb of love, but fathered by vindictive pride, has faced imminent collapse because self-interest is the statesman's creed.

"SERVANTS OF ALL"

In economic life we must remember that finance must be the "servant of all and master of none." (Lest you are tempted to applaud this statement in your hearts, recall that you too are a financier if you possess a bond, an insurance policy, or gain your salary from some endowment fund.) There is no way but sacrifice. In education we must learn that if the college would discharge its task its faculty must yield all pride of rank, all greedy search for salary increase, all academic immunity from social life. The church itself must face a crushing sacrifice if it would find the way through freedom into larger life. This may mean that we must sacrifice sixty to eighty per cent of our church membership and keep a little remnant of those committed to the life of sacrifice. And in our individual lives this test comes home at last. Only by dying can we come to life anew.

IV

If sacrifice is to end in joy there must be faith. Moses passes upon his fellow-countrymen the judgment which is also the explanation of their misery: "Ye would not trust the Lord your God." This was the God whom they had accepted as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. It was a second-hand knowledge of a God of the ancient past. But listen to Moses' words again: "Your God who had gone ahead of you on the road to look for a place for you to pitch your tents," a reconnoitering God! We are to sacrifice not for what is past but for what is on ahead. The futile sacrifices are those where the present is sacrificed to the past, the living to the dead. This is the awful futility of the conservative leaders of our day. Faced with a changing order they would sacrifice our present to their past, the living generation to the dead. A new age is dawning and here we are, "grumbling in our tents." We stand before the promised land, a land of richer human fellowship, of reverence for the least of men, of that wise understanding that risks all for love. What shall be said of us? "Ye would not trust the Lord your God"?

That faith toward which Moses strove is formulated for us now in a life. There was a man who lived in that promised land that Moses could not enter; and he too sought to find a promised land for men of his day. He led his disciples down the long road from Caesarea to Jerusalem, from popularity to ignominy. And he too went on ahead. Breathless they followed, wondering. And then at last he showed them where to pitch their tents, and behold, it was at Golgotha. We march on to freedom, but we must be lifted to it on a cross. This is the sadly needed message which the church must preach for the salvation of our day. It is the message you and I must bring not with our lips but in our lives, giving up ourselves to the service of that God who has gone on ahead. For each of us there is a cross, a sacrifice. This is the call from Calvary. Go up!

When Life Begins

By Halford E. Luccock

Life begins for all of us, in the fullest sense when we get into some kind of a fight. This does not mean that there are any moral values in mere pugnacity; or in that oversimplification of complex questions by which a person sees issues in a sharp black and white contrast. It does mean that we never fully get into the possibilities of life until we feel the reality of moral alternatives, until we acknowledge some undebatable imperative, impelling us to throw the impact of our life into the struggle for the more abundant life of men. The reddest red letter day of any life is when it gets down from the grand-stand into the arena. Life began for Moses at forty when he left the ease of the palace for the excitement of the strike in the slaves' brickyard. Otherwise, he might have been just another mummy with a gold

face in a museum like Rameses bearing the legend: "Discovered by Howard Carter."

Julian Huxley, the English scientist, clearly pictured the other day one inescapable struggle of our generation. Looking into the future, he said that the coming years will present one of two pictures, either science in chains to the profit motive, or science set free to do its possible service to human welfare. We will have the immeasurable powers of science in shackles to private gain, which says to it thus far shalt thou go and no farther, or science liberated in a social order which fits our means of production. The clearest thing in all our complex world today is that a way of life, individualistic in ethics and economics and nationalistic in international relations, a hangover from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, has been shown to be unfitted to the complexities of the twentieth century and unable to furnish a foundation for security.

In the preface to George Bernard Shaw's play, "Too True to be Good," there is a dialogue between Pilate and Jesus, in which Jesus says to Pilate: "The empire that looks backward with fear must give way to the Kingdom that looks forward with hope." That is the issue in our modern world. How well we know "the Empire that looks backward with fear." We live in it. We see it in the monstrous proposal to appropriate more than eight hundred millions of dollars for the navy in a year. We hear it in that raucous, barbarian yell on the floor of the United States senate, "To Hell with Europe." No orgy of demagoguery can alter the fact that a Europe which slips down to disaster drags the world with it. If we gaily condemn Europe to hell, we send ourselves with it.

For God has made all nations to dwell together in a living tether, for better or worse, for richer or poorer, till death do us part.

(Excerpt from a sermon delivered at the Chicago Sunday Evening club.)

Lenten Verse

My Prayer

I KNEEL to pray,
But know not what to say:
I cannot tell
What may be ill or well:
But as I look
Into Thy Face or Book
I see a love
From which I cannot move:
And learn to rest
In this—Thy will is best:

Therefore I pray
Only have Thine own way
In everything
My all wise God and King.
Grant me the grace
In all to give Thee place:
This liberty
Alone I ask of Thee:
This only gift,
Have Thy way perfectly.

MARK GUY PEARSE.

The Cross

SO heavy and so fraught with pain,
But I must bravely trudge along
The dusty way . . . nor dare arraign
My cross.

I have no voice to lift in song;
When sorrow's recompense I feign
The muffled notes of grief remain.

And yet He prayed for strength to drain
The bitter dregs and bear the thong.
His kingly soul did not disdain
The cross.

SHIRLEY DILLON WAITE.

Gethsemane

BREATHES there a man who claimeth not
One lonely spot,
His own Gethsemane,
Whither with his inmost pain
He fain
Would weary plod,
Find the surcease that is known
In wind a-moan
And sobbing sea,
Cry his sorrow hid of men,
And then—
Touch hands with God.

EDMUND LEAMY.

Remembering Calvary

HELP me to suffer when I most would spare
My human frame with pain and weakness spent,
Help me receive with open arms nor dare
To flinch at pain but count myself content,
And all that has been and that is to be
Help me to bear,
Remembering Calvary.

Help me to leash the hounds of my desire,
Taming them to a more submissive will,
Help me to tune again a broken lyre
And find that there is music in it still,
Help me to do these things all cheerfully,
Nor count the cost,
Remembering Calvary.

ETHEL FANNING YOUNG.

Good Friday

WE carve His Cross into an amulet,
The red blood which He shed upon the hill
We make a rite of worship, and forget
The red religion of courageous will.

HUGH O. ISBELL.

The Minister and His Community

By Orvis F. Jordan

RECENTLY a committee of eminent educators laid out the work of the minister. They decided that ministerial education, to completely prepare a man, must fall into six compartments. But none of these included social engineering in the community. These educators see the minister as the servant of his institution. His job is to build up churches but not to usher in the kingdom of God save as his church contributes to this end. Half of the people in the ordinary American community are outside any church. The minister's duty to these is to convert them. But if they refuse to be converted?

Perhaps we ministers are often deluded into thinking we are serving the community when we are not. We are used as decorations on a good many occasions. We deliver invocations on Memorial day, and sit on the platform at Fourth of July celebrations. Various organizations want us to be "present," but they hope we will not say anything that will disturb the program laid out by the leaders!

● *Sitting on the Sidelines*

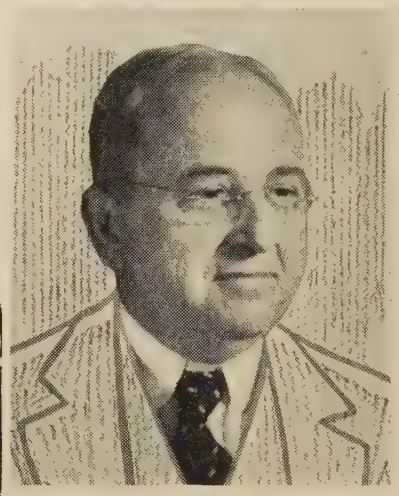
We belong to lodges where we sit on the sidelines during lengthy initiation ceremonies. Or we belong to a well-known luncheon club where our chief function is to be a facile reciter of the current jokes. The kind of minister who really proposes some service in a "service" club is apt to find himself frowned upon as a radical. He should help to get people to trade with the home merchants and boost for better business!

Occasionally one of us becomes a roving minister. This kind of man is never happy unless he has a long list of speaking engagements in all of the nearby towns. He makes bids for commencement orations, talks to women's clubs and gives lectures of various kinds. He may be motivated by the fees, or by the encomiums that he is able to gather for printing on his lecture folder.

There is the minister who never does anything for anybody or anything unless it is directly connected with the activities of his church. He will have a longer pastorate than the rover. But the outsiders in the community will not like him. He may be able to keep his pews full, get new members and raise his budget. These exploits will assure him of the support of the official board of the church. But when he goes, a lot of people will be glad. The town knows that he has failed in an important function. That function is social engineering in the community.

Big city neighborhoods are not so dependent on ministers for leadership as are the rural. They have a great many bright college people. Women whose domestic duties do not absorb all of their time are available for leadership in many good enterprises. There are clubs, committees, boards and organizations all enthusiastic about making the better community.

But this is not the situation in the average American community. The



Orvis F. Jordan

college trained people may not have learned any sociology at all, or may not know how to employ what they do know in the service of a community. College graduates are often a problem in themselves. They were through with books when they got their diploma. The smaller the community, the more certain it becomes that the minister must lead in other than the ecclesiastical enterprise.

● *"The Awakening Community"*

How dead small communities often are may be realized by reading the book, "The Awakening Community," by Mary Mims. The author has worked in many Louisiana communities, and her experiences are set down in a most interesting fashion.

All over the nation young people leave the smaller communities for the big cities because the small town is dead. There is no economic opportunity for them, no recreation, no interesting social life. They hunt the bright lights, though the end of this trail may be moral and economic ruin for them. There is enough to do in a small community in the best of times. The economic depression has multiplied social opportunities. In rural communities and in small towns people must be fed. In many of these communities there is nowhere to go except to the church. The minister, whatever his theories about the nature of his job, finds himself confronted with the problem of keeping body and soul together in unhappy human beings. He may not know the first thing about wise methods of relief. But as the burden increases, he knows there is something more to this than getting money from the fortunate and giving it to the unfortunate.

He sees, as every charity worker sees far more clearly, that true charity is family rehabilitation. In good times many American communities had low levels of subsistence. No national planning will ever take the place of the community planning that is necessary. Miss Mims, in her book, showed people how to develop new types of farming, or how to start small hand industries. No Big Man in Washington can do that for us all. There must be some brains in the small town.

At Sunman, Indiana, for many years the Community church has had a week of special meetings which have contributed to the knowledge of better farming, encouraged better education and have furthered every community cause. There are rural ministers in America who know more about scientific farming than any of the farmers. Their agricultural knowledge gives them a new authority in preaching the gospel.

● *The Minister and Community Health*

Every community needs to know more of the laws of health, and should have a community health program. The clergyman is apt to speak slightingly of the faith cure cults. At least these are conscious of the problem of community health even though their methods often hinder the conscientious physician and delay the application of modern science to health. No minister can hope to be himself an adviser on health matters. But there is the beginning of a movement on the part of the American Medical association to furnish speakers who have medical training. The average town physician hesitates to speak on such matters lest he be accused of "advertising." Among physicians the sin against the Holy Ghost is advertising.

In social settlements in the slum areas of the big cities mothers are taught how to care for their children.

Many mothers in more favorable circumstances lose children for the lack of knowledge that should be available to every American mother.

Health is a community ideal. In many cases the community has a definite health handicap for everybody. It is a job in social engineering to find a way to remove this handicap.

Between church and school there should be a closer friendship than there is. The superintendent of schools often needs a voice other than his own to urge on the community its duty of providing better equipment and more teachers. Happy is that superintendent if some understanding minister becomes the voice of this community cause.

● *The Church and Adult Education*

But the greatest educational opportunity of the church, other than the work of its own religious school, is in providing adult education. Is the average American only twelve years old mentally? If so, it is not due to some limitation set by nature. The educational process, with the average man, stopped too soon.

Most Americans, if they continue their past practice, will vote approval or disapproval of the "new deal" largely on the basis of their personal fortunes. The man whose lot has improved will support the present government. The man who has not found improvement will vote for a change. But there will be not much intelligent action. Is the new deal socialism, as its opponents assert? Is it a "shot in the arm"? Or is it the beginning of a new era of social justice and cooperation? Some adult education would help us to make up our minds.

The grafters in public places, the second rate minds in congress, the venal judges, all indicate an electorate woefully ignorant and shamefully careless. We must have more adult education if we are to make the American form of government work.

Adult education may take the form of elevating standards of culture. It may do more than show a man how to make more money. It may show him the paths to better living. There is no institution in America better equipped to lead out in a great national movement of continued education than the church. But a minister who sees this opportunity must be on the job. When he is, he will have at his beck and call the experts of great state universities and of various uplift organizations.

● *Opportunities in the Field of Recreation*

The recreation problem in America is assuming sinister proportions. As Dr. Eastman has so well shown in The Christian Century, many movies have a most unfortunate influence on the minds of American children. Some films are so good that one may see that the movie might be a great influence for good. The town pool hall is in ill-repute, though the game of pool is one of skill. Dance halls are charged with the responsibility for the downfall of girls though many students of human life believe that good dancing may be a support to the moral code. When one looks about, one realizes that the recreation we complain of is apt to be commercialized recreation. A commercial pool hall may be a low hangout whereas a church may operate pool tables without objectionable features.

The need of providing the community with non-commercialized recreation is the greater in hard times, for many young people have no money to spend, and so fail of recreation. In this field some churches have made notable contributions. The Community church of Winnetka, Illinois, formerly provided the only movies for the town. Church gymnasiums across the land give opportunity for basketball, handball, amateur dramatics and other forms of sport.

There is no particular reason why a minister should lead a Boy Scout troop or direct a basketball team. He is apt to be busy with other things. But he can engineer the project, get it going, and furnish it with good advice when it falls into difficulty.

Dr. Cabot in his book, "What Men Live By," includes the play life among a few great major interests of life. Too many churches take the puritan attitude toward play. Play is not an evil. The playground is often a better preparation for citizenship in America than the classroom. It is the teacher of democracy, respect for law and that rare virtue, sportsmanship.

● *The New Concern for Beauty*

Some travelers say that America is the ugliest of all civilized countries. The pioneers in this country had neither money nor time to concern themselves with beauty. Hence we have a heritage of ugliness. Village stores are ugly when attractive ones might have been built cheaply. Many of the Protestant churches look like fire stations. In village after village the grass is uncut and the cultivation of flowers is neglected. Almost any American community might be easily led to the cultivation of musical taste. The radio deluges us with "hotcha" music because that is supposed to be on the level of their public.

Not every minister is a musician. But as a social engineer he may make himself the friend of those who would contribute to the beauty of good music.

When a minister has gone this far, he is apt to see his religion as a community and not just an ecclesiastical matter. What about that fifty per cent of Americans who do not belong to churches? Are they non-religious people? Are they devoid of the heart hunger that religion satisfies? The alert minister will go back to the very luncheon clubs and lodges where once he sat in shameful idleness and find opportunity to interpret life ideals to the most spiritually hungry people in all America. He will soon have a second parish which is to be reached not directly by a church, but by means of other agencies. This minister of the community mind will use the town paper, the community meeting and every other agency to carry spiritual ideals to people who to their dying day may never darken the doors of his church. The minister who does this may not always be building a church. But he will be following the injunction of his Lord who sent us out into the highways and hedges. Most ministers have refused to go. They have rung a bell and waited for people to come.

● *The New Jerusalem in Our Home Town*

The "new Jerusalem" that ministers have talked so much about is not up in the sky at all. According to the Book, it is to be let down on earth. Those in the new Jerusalem are to have the tears wiped from their eyes. In place of weeping shall be joy. The new Jerusalem may settle right down in my home town. This is not to deny the reality of eternal life, but to make a correct exegesis of a very familiar text.

Once in a while a minister leaves a town where he has served everybody, and not just the saints in a church. And when he leaves the whole town sings his praises. He built more than a church. He built the kingdom of God in an American community. His social sympathy, his spirit of helpfulness and his love of humanity have made him the successful interpreter of the greatest religion in all the world.

Next Month . . .

● The Protestant Episcopal Number

The APRIL issue of The Christian Century Pulpit will be the special Protestant Episcopal Number, and will include sermons by Bishop George Craig Stewart, Bishop James E. Freeman, Bishop Irving P. Johnson, Bishop Charles Fiske, Bishop Edward L. Parsons, Rev. Joseph Fort Newton and Rev. Howard Chandler Robbins.

These leaders were chosen to represent the denomination in its special number by a ballot sent to the ministers listed in the Protestant Episcopal year book.

WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE

SINCE 1918 Rev. JOHN J. MOMENT has been minister at the Crescent Avenue Presbyterian church, Plainfield, N. J. He received his A.B. degree at Princeton university, and his B.D. at Hartford seminary. Among his books are "Faith in Christ" and "The Throne of David."

Rev. EDWARD THURNEYSEN *is pastor of* the great Münster church in Basle, Switzerland, and a lecturer in practical theology in the University of Basle. His education parallels that of Karl Barth, and the two stand close together. Dr. Thurneysen is a joint author with Barth of two volumes of sermons. Rev. E. G. Homrighausen of Indianapolis, who translated the Thurneysen sermon published in this issue, and who knows Dr. Thurneysen and his work intimately, writes of him as a preacher: "Thurneysen's preaching is marked by a terrible sincerity that makes listeners unconscious of the man and conscious of the Object of his preaching. . . . It might be added that rich men have been known to leave his worship hour angered at his 'red' tendencies only to come back attracted by the compelling honesty of the man and the objectivity of the burden of his message."

About five years ago Rev. SAMUEL HARKNESS came from the Westminster Presbyterian church, Kansas City, to the Winnetka Congregational church, on the north rim of Chicago. His is a community church comprising in its membership people from a score of denominations. Dr. Harkness received his education at Colgate.

Graduating from Princeton seminary, Rev. HERBERT BOOTH SMITH was ordained in the Presbyterian ministry in 1909. Since 1916 he has ministered at the Immanuel Presbyterian church of Los Angeles—the second largest Presbyterian church in the country. He has been a leader in the work of his denomination on the coast, as well as in the general activities of the church.

Two years ago Rev. BUELL D. GALLAGHER left the First Congregational church in Passaic, N. J., to accept the presidency of Talladega college in Alabama. All the students of this school are Negroes, the faculty and staff being half white, half colored. Talladega college was founded in 1867 by the American Missionary association. It now stands in the front rank of education in the south, and in its interracial character foreshadows the new day in race relations. Dr. Gallagher received his B.D. from Union, and a few years ago studied at the London School of Economics as a traveling fellow from the seminary.

Rev. WILLIAM BISHOP GATES *has been* pastor of the Morningside Presbyterian church in New York city for several years. Amherst college, of which his father, Merrill E. Gates, was president, gave him his degree and his Phi Beta Kappa key. Dr. Gates attended Union seminary and pursued post-graduate study at Columbia. He founded and was the first pastor of the Wells Memorial Presbyterian church in Brooklyn. In 1926 he was elected moderator of the Synod of New York state.

Born in Glasgow, Dr. EDWIN EWART AUBREY had his early education in Great Britain. Coming to the United States, he received his Ph.B. at Bucknell university; his A.M., D.B. and Ph.D. at the University of Chicago. Having spent a number of years teaching in Carleton college, Miami university and Vassar college, he became professor of Christian theology and ethics in the University of Chicago in 1929, and since 1933 has been chairman of the department of Christian theology and ethics at the university. He has written a number of books, among them "Religion and the Next Generation" and "Reconstructive Forces of Religion."

Rev. FREDERICK W. NORWOOD *is minister* at the City Temple, London.

Rev. ORVIS F. JORDAN *is minister of the* Community church in Park Ridge, a suburb of Chicago.

TITLES AND TEXTS

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

FRED EASTMAN, professor of religious drama, Chicago theological seminary. "Your Signature." Psalm 8:1—"O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" Rev. 22:46—". . . and his name shall be on their foreheads."

RAYMOND C. BURNS, First Baptist, Cleveland, O. "The Cross of Circumstance." Luke 23:26—"And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon, a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear it after Jesus."

OTTO C. SEYMOUR, First Presbyterian, Joplin, Mo. "Poems of the Lord." Eph. 2:10—"For we are His poems." (Moffatt.)

JOHN W. BUCKHAM, professor of theology, Pacific School of Religion. "Contributive Church Unity." Rev. 21:26—"And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it."

ARON L. ROTH, First Baptist, Batavia, Ill. "The Handicapped Christ." Mark 6:5, 6—"And he could do no mighty work. And he marvelled at their unbelief."

OTTO LIEBNER, Bethlehem Methodist, Evansville, Ind. "Moral Color-blindness." Isa. 5:20—". . . those who call evil good, and good evil; who count darkness as light, and light as darkness; who count bitter as sweet, and sweet as bitter."

M. OWEN KELLISON, First Christian, Atchison, Kan. "The Magnet of Righteousness." John 12:32—"I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

Title of sermon

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Text used (Write out the text)

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Name of minister

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Name of church

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Address

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

CONTROVERSY will rage for a long time over the decision rendered by the supreme court in the gold clause cases. Among lawyers there is a widespread tendency to regard the position taken by the majority of the court as a strained interpretation of the law, out of line with those precedents which, from the time of Chief Justice Marshall, have put the weight of the court behind the protection of property rights and the upholding of the sanctity of contracts. The value of the decision from a political and economic standpoint as a means of keeping the industrial machine running without a serious dislocation of its financial gears is generally admitted. But the decision is likely to prove of most importance in the long run as evidence that the nation has reached a point where its highest court intends to treat the law as an agency of social progress, rather than to continue to insist that the law's fundamental purpose is to provide a bulwark for established rights. While the mind of the supreme court remains as it is revealed in this decision, the law will be considered not an absolute but a relative agency for bringing to pass the will of the community. In the past there has been more than a suspicion that big business has used legal talent to escape the absolute prohibitions against consumer exploitation which the law sought to establish. Mr. William C. Whitney once said of Elihu Root that he (Root) "alone tells me how to do what I want to do." So it is that the supreme court, now reversing that form of service, tells the government how to do what must needs be done.

Gold Clause Decision Marks A Legal Milestone

The Book of the Month

WHAT IS THIS CHRISTIANITY? *by Edward S. Woods, Bishop of Croydon. Harper & Brothers, $2.00.*

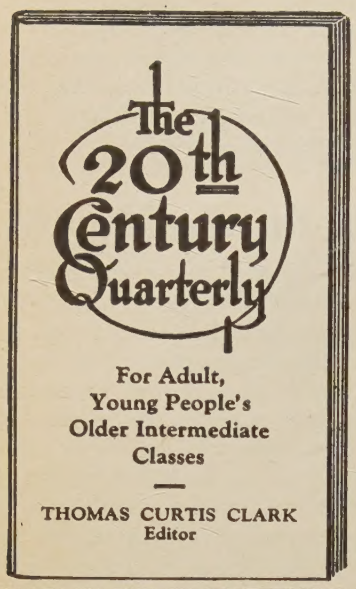
THIS little book is the apologia of a modern Christian who has looked out upon his troubled world, and who still believes that Christianity can furnish the spiritual motive power for its ultimate transformation. To the question, What is this Christianity? Bishop Woods brings a rich background of culture and scholarship as well as the warmth and glow of a deeply spiritual nature. Christianity, says he, is first of all an historic event, a living personality, a spiritual source-spring; and whereas one may well find the meaning of worship outside the Christian tradition, it is impossible not to identify our conception of God with the God which Jesus himself found and revealed. Religion thus becomes also an experience, for with the original event and the experience each individual must blend his own. Our experience must take root in the social and emotional conflicts of our day, precisely as Jesus' experience took root in the conflicts of his own day. It is thus that Christianity becomes a fellowship of those whose common experience in the contemporary world drives them into cooperative efforts toward the realization of common human goals. The ideology of human brotherhood and a common human experience, expressing itself in a common purpose, thus eventuates in the new society. In this society, even while it is still in the making, there develops a new meaning of human brotherhood, and a new conception of the fatherhood of God.

A Thought for the Month

EVERY minister is tempted to err on one side or the other in offering the benefits of religion. Either he takes counsel of his doubts and cultivates a too-cautious reticence in dealing with human needs and afflictions, or he takes counsel of his sympathies and promises too much. The first error generally leads to a sterile ministry; for the essence of the preacher's business is to offer something to the human heart which will make the burdens, the sorrows, the perplexities and the injustices of life endurable. If a minister fails here, he fails everywhere. But the other error is equally serious. It is the error of creating unsound expectations by overselling religion. The priests of religion have always oversold their cult. They have written drafts upon the divine will which it was not in God's purpose or character to honor. The rewards offered have too frequently been materialistic or egoistic or too immediate. In their eagerness to make converts or to help people in trouble ministers all too easily are tempted to make irresponsible, not to say wanton, representations as to what God may be expected to do. It is my judgment that our revivalism has always oversold the conversion experience. It is not so unique an experience as we have made out. Conversion belongs to every sphere of life—to art, to education, to business, to romance, and not to religion alone. Moreover, it does not occur "once for all," but again and again. Perhaps we should exercise a certain restraint in awakening expectations in connection with conversion. Do we not also sometimes promise too much to people who are in trouble? In our desire to help them I wonder if we do not indulge in words of comfort that are all too cheap. We ministers have a pretty easy solution of the problem of evil. Perhaps, as Dean Sperry says, it is better to be on Job's side, even at the price of his tentative agnosticism, than to be on the side of his "comforters" who were so sure of what is not so. Obviously, the Christian Scientist weakens religion by promising too much. I fear that the Barthian theology, in promising divine grace unmediated by anything psychological or natural, is making the same kind of a draft upon God, a draft which God will not consistently honor. And Buchmanism with its "guidance" technique awakens fantastic expectations which lead straight to disillusionment. Our God is not a capricious God, and we misrepresent him by every capricious or magical promise which we make in his name. There is a great text for all that I am saying. It was used by Jesus in his temptation: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

Overselling Religion

Charles Clayton Morrison



For Adult,
Young People's
Older Intermediate
Classes

THOMAS CURTIS CLARK
Editor

NOW IN ITS SEVENTEENTH YEAR OF SERVICE

These Men Make The 20th Century Quarterly

HERBERT L. WILLETT, Jr. Formerly professor in the American University, Beirut, Syria. His department in the Quarterly, "Clearing Up Difficult Points."

ALBERT BUCKNER COE. Minister of the leading church in Congregationalism (First, Oak Park, Chicago). His department, "At Grips With the Lesson."

JOHN R. EWERS. Vital and dynamic minister of the East End Church of Disciples in Pittsburgh. "The Lesson Brought Down to Date" is his department.

ROY L. SMITH. Minister of the First Methodist Church of Los Angeles, and widely famed for his syndicated "Sentence Sermons." His department, "Pointers."

STANLEY I. STUBER. Journalist-minded preacher, contributor to many magazines. Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Clifton Springs, N. Y. Mr. Stuber conducts "The Lesson Forum."

HUGH THOMSON KERR. Minister of the Shadyside Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh; preacher to students; former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. Dr. Kerr contributes the "Prayer Thought."

604 SUNDAY SCHOOLS have, this quarter, and for the first time, adopted THE 20TH CENTURY QUARTERLY for use in their Intermediate, Young People's and Adult Classes, for 1935. Located in practically every state in the country, these schools represent an interesting cross-section of American Protestantism. Here is a partial list of the many denominations represented:

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